

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A machine-readable medium that stores a pricing database accessible by a
2 computer, the pricing database organized according to a data structure which
3 defines:
 - 4 a plurality of representations of food products; and
 - 5 a plurality of price ranges, each corresponding to a respective one of
6 the plurality of food products and each defining a maximum price and a minimum
7 price for which the corresponding food product may be sold in exchange for a
8 round-up amount associated with a purchase.
- 1 2. A machine-readable medium that stores a pricing database accessible by
2 computer, the pricing database organized according to a data structure which
3 defines:
 - 4 a plurality of age categories corresponding to a food product; and
 - 5 a plurality of price ranges, each corresponding to a respective one of
6 the plurality of age categories and defining a maximum price and a minimum price
7 for which the corresponding food product may be sold in exchange for a round-up
8 amount associated with a purchase when an age of the food product corresponds to
9 the one of the plurality of age categories.
- 1 3. A method, comprising:
2 determining a time until expiration of a food product;
3 setting a price range of the food product based on the time until expiration;
4 and
5 storing an indication that the food product may be offered in exchange for a
6 round-up amount if the round-up amount is within the price range.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3, wherein the price range defines a minimum price
2 and a maximum price.
- 1 5. A method, comprising:
2 generating a purchase price of a purchase;

3 generating a rounded price;
4 calculating a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
5 between the purchase price and the rounded price;
6 identifying a food product and a corresponding price range of the food
7 product, wherein the round-up amount is within the price range; and
8 offering the food product in exchange for the round-up amount.

1 6. The method of claim 5, wherein the step of identifying a food product
2 comprises:
3 determining a first product, the first product corresponding to a first price
4 range wherein the round-up amount is within the first price range;
5 determining a second product, the second product corresponding to a
6 second price range wherein the round-up amount is within the second price range;
7 and
8 selecting one of the first and the second product to offer in exchange for the
9 round-up amount.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of selecting comprises:
2 selecting one of the first and the second product to offer in exchange for the
3 round-up amount in a random fashion.

1 8. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of selecting comprises:
2 receiving at least one characteristic of the purchase; and
3 selecting one of the first and second product to offer in exchange for the
4 round-up amount based on the at least one characteristic.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of receiving at least one
2 characteristic of the purchase comprises:
3 receiving an indication of at least one of (i) a number of customers
4 associated with the purchase, (ii) at least one product included in the purchase, (iii)
5 an age of a customer associated with the purchase, (iv) a weight of a customer

6 associated with the purchase, and (v) a gender of a customer associated with the
7 purchase.

1 10. A method, comprising:
2 determining a status of at least one characteristic of a food product, the at
3 least one characteristic being indicative of the age of the food product:
4 setting a price range of the food product based on the status, wherein the
5 price range defines a minimum price and a maximum price;
6 generating a purchase price of a purchase;
7 generating a rounded price;
8 calculating a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
9 between the purchase price and the rounded price; and
10 causing the food product to be offered in exchange for the round-up amount
11 if the round-up amount is within the price range.

1 11. The method of claim 10, wherein the at least one characteristic comprises at
2 least one of (i) a temperature of the food product, (ii) a staleness of the food
3 product, and (iii) a soggianness of the food product.

1 12. A method, comprising:
2 determining a time until expiration of a food component;
3 causing the food component to be made into a food product if the time until
4 expiration is less than a predetermined threshold;
5 setting a minimum price for the food product based on the time until
6 expiration of the food component; and
7 causing the food product to be offered in exchange for a round-up amount,
8 wherein the round-up amount is a difference between a purchase price and a
9 rounded price of a purchase.

1 13. A method, comprising:
2 determining a time until expiration of a food component;
3 determining a food product corresponding to the food component;

4 setting a price range for the food product, wherein the price range defines a
5 minimum price and a maximum price; and
6 causing an offer to exchange the food product for a round-up amount if the
7 round-up amount is within the price range to be output, wherein the round-up
8 amount is a difference between a purchase price and a rounded price of a purchase.

1 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:
2 causing the food component to be made into the food product and provided
3 in exchange for the round-up amount if the offer is accepted.

1 15. A method, comprising:
2 determining a time until expiration of at least one food component of a food
3 product;
4 determining a time until expiration of the food product based on the time
5 until expiration of the at least one food component;
6 setting a price range for the food product, wherein the price range defines a
7 minimum price and a maximum price; and
8 causing an offer to exchange the food product for a round-up amount if the
9 round-up amount is within the price range to be output, wherein the round-up
10 amount is a difference between a purchase price and a rounded price of a purchase.

1 16. An apparatus comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor in communication with the storage device, the storage device
4 storing a program for controlling the processor; and
5 the processor operative with the program to:
6 determine a time until expiration of a food product;
7 set a price range of the food product based on the time until
8 expiration; and
9 store an indication that the food product may be offered in exchange
10 for a round-up amount if the round-up amount is within the price range.

1 17. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor in communication with the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and
5 the processor operative with the program to:
6 generate a purchase price of a purchase;
7 generate a rounded price;
8 calculate a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
9 between the purchase price and the rounded price;
10 identify a food product and a corresponding price range of the food
11 product, wherein the round-up amount is within the price range; and
12 offer the food product in exchange for the round-up amount.

1 18. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor in communication with the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and
5 the processor operative with the program to:
6 determine a status of at least one characteristic of a food product,
7 the at least one characteristic being indicative of the age of the food product:
8 set a price range of the food product based on the status, wherein
9 the price range defines a minimum price and a maximum price;
10 generate a purchase price of a purchase;
11 generate a rounded price;
12 calculate a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
13 between the purchase price and the rounded price; and
14 cause the food product to be offered in exchange for the round-up
15 amount if the round-up amount is within the price range.

1 19. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor in communication with the storage device,

4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and
5 the processor operative with the program to:
6 determine a time until expiration of a food component;
7 cause the food component to be made into a food product if the time
8 until expiration is less than a predetermined threshold;
9 set a minimum price for the food product based on the time until
10 expiration of the food component; and
11 cause the food product to be offered in exchange for a round-up
12 amount, wherein the round-up amount is a difference between a purchase price and
13 a rounded price of a purchase.

1 20. An apparatus, comprising:
2 a storage device; and
3 a processor in communication with the storage device,
4 the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor; and
5 the processor operative with the program to:
6 determine a time until expiration of a food component;
7 determine a food product corresponding to the food component;
8 set a price range for the food product, wherein the price range
9 defines a minimum price and a maximum price; and
10 cause an offer to exchange the food product for a round-up amount
11 if the round-up amount is within the price range to be output, wherein the round-up
12 amount is a difference between a purchase price and a rounded price of a purchase.

1 21. A medium encoded with a program for implementing a method, said program
2 for directing a device to perform the steps of:
3 determining a time until expiration of a food product;
4 setting a price range of the food product based on the time until
5 expiration; and
6 storing an indication that the food product may be offered in
7 exchange for a round-up amount if the round-up amount is within the price range.

1 22. A medium encoded with a program for implementing a method, said
2 program for directing a device to perform the steps of:
3 generating a purchase price of a purchase;
4 generating a rounded price;
5 calculating a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
6 between the purchase price and the rounded price;
7 identifying a food product and a corresponding price range of the
8 food product, wherein the round-up amount is within the price range; and
9 offering the food product in exchange for the round-up amount.

1 23. A medium encoded with a program for implementing a method, said
2 program for directing a device to perform the steps of:
3 determining a status of at least one characteristic of a food product,
4 the at least one characteristic being indicative of the age of the food product:
5 setting a price range of the food product based on the status,
6 wherein the price range defines a minimum price and a maximum price;
7 generating a purchase price of a purchase;
8 generating a rounded price;
9 calculating a round-up amount, the round amount being a difference
10 between the purchase price and the rounded price; and
11 causing the food product to be offered in exchange for the round-up
12 amount if the round-up amount is within the price range.

1 24. A medium encoded with a program for implementing a method, said
2 program for directing a device to perform the steps of:
3 determining a time until expiration of a food component;
4 causing the food component to be made into a food product if the
5 time until expiration is less than a predetermined threshold;
6 setting a minimum price for the food product based on the time until
7 expiration of the food component; and

8 causing the food product to be offered in exchange for a round-up
9 amount, wherein the round-up amount is a difference between a purchase price and
10 a rounded price of a purchase.

25. A medium encoded with a program for implementing a method, said program for directing a device to perform the steps of:

- determining a time until expiration of a food component;
- determining a food product corresponding to the food component;
- setting a price range for the food product, wherein the price range defines a minimum price and a maximum price; and

causing an offer to exchange the food product for a round-up amount if the round-up amount is within the price range to be output, wherein the round-up amount is a difference between a purchase price and a rounded price of a purchase.